

MASSACHUSETTS CIVIL DEFENSE ACT AND RELATED STATUTES
Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 639. Sections 1 & 13

Section 1 “Civil Defense” shall mean the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions, other than functions for which military forces other than the National Guard are primarily responsible, for the purpose of minimizing and repairing injury and damage resulting from disasters caused by attack, sabotage or other hostile action or by fire, flood, earthquake or other natural causes; said functions shall include specifically, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, fire-fighting and police services, medical and health services, rescue, engineering and air-raid warning services, evacuation of persons from stricken areas, emergency welfare services, communications, radiological, chemical and other special weapons of defense, emergency transportation, existing or properly assigned functions of plant protection, temporary restoration of public utility services and other functions;

“Local organization of Civil Defense” shall mean an organization created in accordance with the provisions of this act by state or local authority to perform local civil defense functions

Section 13 Each political subdivision of the Commonwealth is hereby authorized and directed to establish a local organization for civil defense in accordance with the state civil defense plan and program. Each local organization for civil defense shall have a director, who shall, in case of a city, be appointed by the mayor, or in a city having the Plane E form of government by the city manager, and in towns shall be appointed by the selectman, or in towns having a town manager by the manager, and who shall have direct responsibility for the organization, administration and operation of such local organization for civil defense, subject to the direction and control of such appointing authority. Each local organization for civil defense shall perform civil defense functions within the territorial limits of the political subdivision within which it is organized, and, in addition, shall conduct such functions outside of such territorial limits as may be required pursuant to the provisions of section seven of this act.

In carrying out the provisions of this act, each political subdivision in which any disaster, as described in section one, occurs, shall have the power to enter into contracts and incur obligations necessary to combat such disaster, protecting the health and safety of persons and property, and providing emergency assistance to the victims of such disaster. Each political subdivision is authorized to exercise the powers vested under this section in the light of exigencies of the extreme emergency situation, without regard to time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by law, excepting mandatory constitutional requirements, pertaining to the performance of public work, entering into contracts, the incurring of obligations, the employment of temporary workers, the rental of equipment, the purchase of supplies and materials, the levying of taxes and the appropriation and expenditures of public funds.